Catholic Know-Your-Bible Program

The Personality of JESUS

The Personality of Jesus

1.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT — *August Jerndorff*

The Personality of JESUS

BY

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The Catholic Know-Your-Bible Program

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The Personality of Jesus

Author's Note

WHO DARES to portray Jesus Christ, the Son of God? That was my first thought when the editor of the Catholic Know-Your-Bible Program approached me to write this album on *The Personality of Jesus*. No human could begin to understand this divine Subject.

Yet we must all try, for that is why Jesus became man — to lead us to God through His humanity. He chose to come to us as man, so we must go to Him as man — just as His first followers did.

In this album I attempt to re-create several well-known incidents in the life of Our Lord, in terms of the impact He might have had on His friends — and enemies. We might have been in their positions; how would we have reacted?

The Gospel writers give us the outlines of these key events. In keeping with the aims of the Catholic Know-Your-Bible Program, I have tried to sketch in the human details, in the hope that readers today might be better able to *picture* these scenes. Accordingly, many of the characters in these pages are fictional: Ruben, Issachar, Shadrach, Dara, Abner, Cushan, Keziah, Linus, Ezar, Asshurim, Mesech, Tamar, Jared, Peresh, Caleb, Lydia, Prochorus, Thara, Abiel, and Demetrius.

T SEEMED as if the doctors who taught in the Temple at Jerusalem could not stop exclaiming to one another about the unknown boy of twelve, not one of their regular pupils, who had slipped in and sat down and listened and asked questions. "Weren't they amazing, His quick understanding and brilliant flashes of insight! There was nothing *we* could teach *Him,* it was all the other way round. Who can He have been?" They went on and on wondering about Jesus, for that was what His Mother had called Him in her tender reproach that He should have let His father and herself remain in such a state of terrible anxiety for three whole days, searching for Him in vain — "Because they didn't miss Him until they were on their way home from Jerusalem, and then each of them thought He was probably with another party of their kinsfolk and friends."

And the most learned of the rabbis repeated, "Did you hear the queer thing He said to her, sternly too for His age: 'I must be about My Father's business'? Then directly afterwards He hugged and kissed them and reassured them of His devotion."

"No, I can't agree that He said it sternly," another rabbi countered. "He said it as though He were marveling how His Mother and father hadn't known already where He might have lingered."

" 'About My Father's business' . . . I think that the man who came to look for Him must have been His foster-father."

But they were so obsessed by the boy Himself that they had no room in their minds to debate His strange remark to His Mother. And they were

glad they had all seen and heard Him for themselves and therefore did not have to find words to describe Him to one another. They continued repeating over and over: "No scholar who ever entered this Temple could hold a candle to Him."

But Mary could not forget this poignant reminder of what secretly she had known all along and pondered in her heart, ever since she had accepted the archangel's message about the Child who was to be born: "Be it done unto me . . ."

She and Joseph had noticed His delight in gathering round Him the other youngsters who also dwelt in Nazareth (NAZZ-uh-reth), laughing and playing and rejoicing in their company. "He's so popular, we can't keep them away from Him," their parents would tell Mary. "It's as natural for them as going to a birthday party to run along to your house calling, 'Jesus! Where's

Jesus?' An only child isn't usually like that — though He has a cousin John, didn't you say, a little older than Himself?"

"Yes, another only child, of the priest Zachary (ZACK-uh-ree) and my dear Elizabeth, his wife. But they live in the hill country of Judea, a long way from here, and we rarely see him. Once, before John and Jesus were born, I traveled there on foot and stayed for three months. We were so happy, Elizabeth and I, looking forward to our babies."

The Calling of Nathaniel

WHEN John was thirty, he had a sign from Heaven and came to the country around the River Jordan, calling loudly on men to repent, to have their sins forgiven, and to be baptized in the waters of the river.

"For of such is the kingdom of Heaven"

CAMERA CLIX

ST. JOSEPH AND THE CHILD — *Murillo*

One day, when he was near Bethania (beh-THAY-nee-uh) and the multitudes crowded round asking if he were the Christ, the Messias (meh-SIGH-us) so long expected, John saw Jesus among them and told the multitudes that here was their answer: "I am not worthy to untie the strap of this man's sandal."

The next day, two of John's own disciples again heard him say of his cousin walking nearby, "This is the Son of God." One of the two was also called John and the other Andrew. Suddenly they both felt with a desperate urgency, yet bursting with joy at the encounter, that they had to follow Jesus, to hear Him talk and even know where He lived, because everything connected with Him was so tremendously important, down to the four walls of His lodgings. Yet suppose He sent them away courteously, implying that He preferred to be alone for meditation and prayer? They could have shouted with relief at His welcoming reply, "Come and see where I live." But first Andrew rushed off to find his brother Simon Peter.

"Why, what's happened to you, Andrew?" asked the latter bluntly. "Have you taken out the boat without me and had the haul of a lifetime?"

"Simon, Simon, we've discovered the Christ!"

Philip was the next to join them; not a shadow of doubt in Philip either, once he had met Jesus. And then Philip sought out Nathaniel.

"Nathaniel, we've found the Christ, and we're already His faithful followers, Andrew and John and Simon Peter and I. Come and join us. You must! You can't possibly stay out of it all. He's — oh dear, I wish there were a more splendid word than just splendid!"

But perversely, Nathaniel remained aloof and uninterested. "Who is He, this man? Or isn't He a man at all, but a sort of cloudy vision you've all conjured up, floating over the hilltops?"

Philip could have shaken him for such a listless reaction. A cloudy vision indeed! "He's Jesus, the carpenter from the little town of Nazareth. We've been all day sitting and talking with Him in His lodgings, and it seems less than five minutes."

But Nathaniel went on being annoying. He shrugged his shoulders and remarked that nothing good could have come from Nazareth. Philip could barely control himself and manage not to quarrel with him for his tiresome skepticism; quarreling would not be likely to bring him into touch with Jesus, and if that good end could be achieved by a little more persuasion, victory must be swift and certain. Furthermore, instinct told him that Na-

thaniel, in spite of his stubbornness, might prove worth his salt, and he drew a breath of relief when Jesus at once confirmed his instinct and greeted the newcomer as a true and truthful son of Israel.

"How did You know me?" asked Nathaniel, astonished.

When Jesus carelessly informed him, "Oh, I saw you when you were still sitting under the fig tree," Philip had to work hard not to chuckle at the stupefaction on his friend's face.

"But You couldn't have seen me," Nathaniel persisted. "I was out of sight!"

"Couldn't I, Nathaniel? But I did."

"Master, You are the Son of God, the King of Israel!"

Jesus laughed, making light of the incident. "What, all because I saw you sitting under the fig tree? I promise you, you shall witness greater things as we go on."

But Nathaniel had the sort of nature which could not stop wondering, and when Philip chaffed him over his previous reluctance to join the followers of the Nazarene, he kept on saying, "He saw me. He actually *saw* me sitting under the fig tree — when I was out of sight!"

The Wedding Feast at Cana

THE WEDDING FEAST had been a triumphant success, though at one moment it looked as though it would collapse and put the hosts to shame because they had not provided enough wine for the guests. The servants, Ruben and Issachar (ISS-uh-kar), were still stunned by the miracle they had witnessed when they were told to fill to the brim the great stone water jars standing there for the Jewish ceremony of washing.

Not that they had not noticed how this man Jesus was different from the rest of the company at the wedding. He had arrived in Cana (KAY-nuh) with His friends as though He were delighted to be there. He joined first one little group and then another, adding His own gaiety to theirs, heightening it, and making them feel even more convivial — as though a wedding in itself were of value as well as the feast.

And then came the awful discovery about the wine.

Ruben took his duties seriously. To whom could he turn when the bridegroom called out to the chief steward for more wine and the chief steward

Jesus instructing His disciples

CAMERA CLIX

THE WEDDING FEAST AT CANA — *Jacopo da Ponte*

passed on the responsibility? So he confided the heavy problem to Mary, for she was an old friend of the family and the servants remembered how she was always helpful and always concerned to shield them from a scolding, even when they deserved it.

Mary did not look at it as a trifling matter that anyhow was no affair of hers. But because she herself could provide no practical solution, for wine was a man's province, she touched her Son on the arm and spoke to Him in a low voice, but confident He would quickly come to the rescue:

"Jesus, they have no more wine."

Ruben saw Him stop and smile at her, as though understanding united them like a fine silk cord. At the same time He answered teasingly, "You're always wanting Me to do something before I'm ready!"

"Before I'm ready . . ." What lay underneath those words? What impelled

6.

CHRIST AT THE AGE OF TWELVE — *Heinrich Hofmann*

her to turn to Ruben and Issachar and murmur aside to them, "Do whatever He tells you"?

So they waited for orders. And it was while they waited that they were aware that His tone was born of a quiet power such as neither had ever imagined could exist.

"Fill the water jars to the brim."

And obediently they filled the great stone jars. . . .

What happened then was so strange, so like a dream too good to be true, that not till the next day were they able to talk to one another, in hushed voices, of what they had seen when they drew from the jars and handed a draught to the master of the feast:

"Remember how he smacked his lips and questioned the bridegroom on having kept the best wine to be served at the end of the feast?"

"Yes, kept it and served it — that's all they'll ever know. But we, Issachar, you and I, we *saw* Him turn the water into wine."

The Scourging of the Traders and Money-Changers

SHADRACH (SHAD-rack) was a huckster who had always brought home an abundant supply of shekels from selling pigeons and lambs for sacrifice in the courts of the Temple of Jerusalem. That evening his wife and mother were at their wits' end to know what to prepare for his supper. He sat outside the door of the house, head sunk in his hands, refusing to be comforted and muttering threats of revenge on the prophet Jesus. "I'm ruined, I tell you, ruined!" he kept groaning.

Dara had whispered to the children to keep away from their father and play somewhere else. This they were glad enough to do, seeing him in this surly temper. Dara was indeed relieved when his kinsman, the corn-merchant from Siloam (sye-LOW-um), appeared out front, alighted, and accepted the offer of a flagon of wine. He joined Shadrach and with some curiosity asked that plump, usually cheerful, and self-satisfied person what ailed him that he groaned so loudly.

"Now perhaps we shall hear what has happened," whispered Dara to her mother, and they tiptoed from the kitchen to stand just within the doorway where they could listen.

"Jesus of Nazareth, He calls Himself! What right has He to stand up there on the steps, brandishing a scourge made out of cords and threatening with His wrath us honest fellows who have to work and earn a living? Woe is me! Oh, woe is me! What harm did we ever do to Him?

"We've always sat there selling our wares, oxen and sheep and pigeons, with the money-changers at their tables. How dared He, a stranger, fling our silver and gold all over the floor of the courtyard? And look at this great weal right across my back. Ouch! Don't touch it! Oh Lord, oh Lord! Robbers and liars He called us — me, a son of Jeriah (jeh-RYE-uh)!"

"But didn't the Temple police interfere? After all, He was damaging property and creating a disturbance."

"The police? They tried but could do nothing. I tell you, He was too

terrible and strong and tall — taller than all of us by one or two feet." Shadrach appealed to a fellow-sufferer who had just joined them. "You saw Him too, Abner, with His auburn hair and eyes of flame. A man possessed by a devil! Police? An army in battle array couldn't have stopped that dynamic force. Oh, woe is me!"

But Abner, equally in need of consolation but less vehement than Shadrach, ventured to contradict about the titanic stature of the prophet. A man in a rage, he said, always looked taller and more terrible than little quiet peace-loving merchants like themselves. "But I think we'd find Him different if we were to meet Him in the streets of Jerusalem bending to talk with the

"Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"

9.

CHRIST GIVING HIS BLESSING — *Hans Holbein the Elder*

AACHEN, WEST GERMANY

children. I've heard it said of Him that He's very fond of children. He lifted Cushan's small son onto His shoulder one day and whispered something that made the lad shout with laughter, and he sat up there happy as a king. And you know, Shadrach," he went on, "we needn't be ruined. We can set up our tables and sell our wares in other places than the Temple court."

"That's just what I was about to ask," put in Shadrach's cousin, the corn-merchant. "Isn't there any other spot almost as good?"

But Shadrach preferred to go on darkly enjoying the picture of himself ruined by this Jesus. The stripe across his back was throbbing a little — not much; he disliked new places; and there had been genuine relish day after

day in sitting at his usual place, cheating and quarreling and bargaining and raking in the coins, and at sunset counting his gains.

Yet the words uttered by this Jesus went on churning through his mind: "My house is the house of God, but you have made it a den of thieves! . . . a den of thieves . . . a den of thieves . . ."

The Woman at Jacob's Well

"YOU'LL NEVER BELIEVE ME, but He knew already — this man I met sitting by Jacob's Well. Yes, He knew already, without my telling Him, that I'd had five husbands and that Linus (LIE-nus) is not my husband. I told Him that He *couldn't* know. 'We've never met before,' I said, 'and You live a long way from here.' 'Couldn't I, My child?' He replied quietly. 'But I do!'

"I think He *must* be the Christ whom we have all been waiting for for so long. He said He was, and you have only to talk to Him, to look into His eyes, to know that it's true. Come along, all of you. See for yourselves!"

But the townsfolk of Sichar (SIGH-kar) in Samaria (suh-MAHR-ee-uh) were not in such a hurry as Keziah (keh-ZYE-uh) would have them be, though they were surprised at the difference between the woman who had gone forth a short while ago to draw water from Jacob's Well and this woman now alight with wonder and a sort of tremulous joy, urging them to go back with her to see the prophet whom she had declared was indeed the Messias. Disregarding her impatience, they pelted her with questions: Was He young or old? Was He alone? Who had spoken first?

"He did. He asked me for some water to drink. He seemed very hot and tired, and at first looked just like any other tired, thirsty man sitting at a well. So naturally I asked Him how it was that He, a Jew, asked me, a Samaritan, for a drink. After all, how often does a Jew have anything to do with one of us? But then He answered, and everything changed."

She paused, out of breath, and her audience, impressed by this mysterious excitement flowing out of her, urged her to go on. "How was everything changed? Keziah, you do tell a story so badly!"

The woman answered slowly. "It was somehow His . . . stillness. He said He could provide me with living water, and — oh, I was still being so stupid! — I asked Him how that could be, for He had no bucket and the

Two views of Cana, where Jesus performed His first miracle

MATSON

well was so deep. Then this prophet said" — she sank her voice to a whisper so that only those nearest her could hear — " 'The living water I can give will be a spring of water that flows forever.' "

"That isn't Keziah speaking," whispered one of her neighbors. "She's quoting what that prophet said. None of it seems to make sense. Perhaps we had better go and hear for ourselves."

"Curious, though — if there were nothing in it, how could He have been able to tell her the story of her life and about her five husbands? After all, the Jews and the Samaritans never mix. How could He have known unless—"

Unless He were, at long last, the Christ, the Saviour of the world. When they went out to Him, they urged Him to stay with them. He did stay two days, and they believed in Him.

The Curing of the Paralyzed Man

EZAR (EEZ-ur) thrived on the excitement of being in on events. It was his boast that he never missed anything. It was meat and drink to him when something really dramatic suddenly happened before his very eyes and he could scuttle around reporting it to everyone. "There's no harm in Ezar," people said indulgently, and in fact news which they would otherwise not have heard for weeks or months he brought to their thresholds. He was a busy narrator, though at moments his tongue tripped over itself and he stammered a little. The funny thing was that he usually proved to be right in his reports. These things had actually happened as he said, otherwise his audience would soon have given up listening to him.

So when tales began to be spread round of the prophet Jesus and His miraculous cures, Ezar neglected his shop, where he sold spices, for the sake of being *there,* where Jesus was. He *must* be there — even though it involved a good deal of footwork. He had not actually beheld with his own eyes the miracle that had taken place at Cana, but it happened that he was in the neighborhood almost immediately afterwards, while awe was still fresh on the tongues of Ruben and Issachar; and, his curiosity whetted by rumors, he sought them out at an inn one day and asked them question after question, begging for details.

But all that Ruben and Issachar had to say was contained in the simple statement, "There was water in the great jars and He turned it into wine."

Jesus praying to His Father

"Where is He now and what is He doing? How can I find Him?"

They shrugged their shoulders, and off went Ezar on his quest.

By sheer luck in Capharnaum (kuh-FAR-nay-um) he came to a house where Jesus was preaching within. Such a crowd had gathered! There was no room even in front of the door.

All at once four men made their way through the multitude carrying a bed on which lay a paralyzed man. "You'll never get him past the threshold," cried Ezar. "Without the bed, perhaps, but not on the bed."

The four mattress bearers looked glum but had to admit he was right.

Then Ezar had an idea. "Why not carry it round by the back of the house and then up on the roof? You can take away the tiles over the spot where Jesus is standing, then lower the man down."

The friends of the man hesitated. They would have liked to say to this officious little fellow, "Who do you think you are?" But since it was a good idea, and they terribly wanted their friend Asshurim (ASH-you-rim) to be cured by a miracle, they agreed. One of them, now very tired, gratefully accepted Ezar's offer to take his place.

It was quite simple stripping the tiles from the flat roof to make an opening wide enough to lower the man on the mattress, and they accomplished it without a mishap.

Then they saw Jesus. He spoke directly to the sick man: "Son, your sins are forgiven." After a moment's silence, He turned and spoke sternly to the scribes, reading their secret thought that only God can forgive sins. "Which command is easier to give, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or 'Rise, take up your bed, and walk?' As though this man's sins could be *less* important to our Father in Heaven! But now, since you seem to demand visible evidence of My authority" — He turned to the paralyzed man — "Rise up, take your bed, and go home."

Ezar and the other three men on the roof, those in the room, and those crowding round the door all saw it. The helpless man rose up at once and walked out in full sight of them, carrying his bed with him.

It could not be true . . . yet it was. Ezar did not need to follow Asshurim to collect firsthand evidence. He remained sprawled on the roof, stunned. With his very own eyes he had witnessed a miracle, a real miracle. Jesus had said, "Take up your bed and walk," and the power that rang through His voice had been enough. No paralyzed limbs could withstand it. Had a hun-

dred paralyzed men lain there, life would have instantly stirred in their bodies. Life could not disobey when Life commanded.

It might have been an hour or longer before Ezar recovered and returned once more to his old plump, jolly self, scampering around in search of sensations, determining to be in on any further miracle that Jesus might perform.

He was fortunate, too, for he was indeed present when Jesus, moved with pity for another paralyzed man, restored him in the same fashion. And there was a man possessed by an unclean spirit who did not ask to be cured but resisted it loudly. And when Jesus ordered the spirit to come out of him, it was all Ezar could do not to cheer at this fresh triumph over the Evil One.

Even more thrilling was the day when a poor man with a withered hand was cured. Jesus said, "Stretch out your hand."

"But that's the whole point, Master. I *can't* stretch it out. Cure me first and then I will."

But that was not how this Jesus worked His miracles: "Stretch out your hand," He repeated, and such a strong compulsion flowed from Him that the man had to obey the call of Life and stretch out his withered hand. And because he obeyed, the shriveled hand was restored to him as sound as his other one.

The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes

AFTER THIS, Ezar became a little too confident that his instinct would surely guide him to the very spot of sensational happenings. And so he was humiliated when he met a huge multitude already returning from the hillside across the Sea of Galilee (GAL-uh-lee), jabbering about the abundant feast Jesus had provided for them. Without invitation they had followed Him, and He saw they had brought along nothing to eat. There had been a boy who piped up and said he had five barley loaves and two fishes. . . .

"Don't! Don't!" cried Ezar. "Don't tell me any more. I can't bear it!" He had wasted the time looking for a short cut round to the far side of the lake, but no short cut existed. Nevertheless they insisted on pouring it all out, and of course he could hear quite well even though he had his hands over his ears.

Jesus had said that they were all to sit down on the grassy slope. "There must have been thousands of us. He took the loaves and gave thanks and told His friends to pass them round among us, and our share of the fishes

too, as much as we wanted. When we couldn't eat any more, there were still hunks of bread lying all over the grass. We left His friends picking them up and putting them into baskets."

When Ezar gloomily reached the hillside where the feast had been, they were still gathering the leftovers into baskets. Rather crossly Ezar went to help them. Finding himself close to one of Jesus' regular followers whom they called John, he asked, "If you only had five loaves and two fishes, how could you possibly take them round and distribute them among thousands of hungry men?"

"It's difficult to describe," John replied, pausing in his labors and straightening his back for a moment.

At Jesus' command, the lame walked.

MONKMEYER

SERMON BY THE SEA OF GALILEE — *Fritz Uhde*

Still in a bad temper, Ezar grumbled, "I could describe it fast enough if I'd been here."

"He can turn everything into abundance," John said, "but I still don't understand how. It was as though the bread went on and on multiplying in my hands as I passed it around, and somehow I knew that it always would, that it always will. . . ."

"You've no appetite for your supper, Mesech (ME-sheck)," remarked his mother. Having indulgently heaped up her boy's plate with rice and stewed meat and a mixture of cooked beans, leeks, and eggplant, she now saw how he had played with it and left most of it uneaten. "That isn't like you, after a day in the open air."

Her sister reminded her that she had packed an unusually large lunch for

FAMOUS PASSAGES FROM THE *Sermon on the Mount*

AND seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain, and when He was set down, His disciples came unto Him. And opening His mouth, He taught them, saying,

Blessed are the poor in spirit:
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are the meek:
for they shall possess the land.
Blessed are they that mourn:
for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice:
for they shall have their fill.
Blessed are the merciful:
for they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the clean of heart:
for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers:
for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they that suffer persecution
for justice' sake:
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you when they shall revile you,
and persecute you, and speak all that
is evil against you, untruly, for My
sake.
Be glad and rejoice, for your reward
is very great in heaven.
For so they persecuted the prophets
that were before you.
You are the salt of the earth.
But if the salt lose its savour,
wherewith shall it be salted?
It is good for nothing any more
but to be cast out,
and to be trodden on by men.
You are the light of the world.
A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid.
Neither do men light a candle and put it
under a bushel, but upon a candlestick,
that it may shine to all that are in the
house.
So let your light shine before men,
that they may see your good works,
and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

MATTHEW *5, 1-16*

Mesech when he went forth picknicking, so there was no need to be anxious about Master Mesech. "Five loaves and a couple of fish for just one little boy — or perhaps he shared it with a friend?"

"But lunch was a long time ago. You're not going to be ill, darling, are you?" Anxiously his mother felt his forehead and rumpled back his thick black curls.

"You fuss over him too much, Tamar (TAY-mur). I know he has no father now, but even so . . ."

"I'm perfectly well, but I'm going to bed now," replied Mesech. "And please, Mother," he whispered, "will you come up soon to say goodnight to me?"

When they were alone, with no fussy, overtalkative aunts to interrupt with exclamations of amazement, he confided to his mother what had happened to his lunch on the slope above the Sea of Galilee. A nice man called Andrew had taken him along to Jesus and said, "Here he is, Master, the boy with his barley loaves and fishes, the only one I could find in all this great multitude who had any food at all."

"And the Master smiled and put His arm round my shoulders and drew me a little away from the rest, and it felt as though He were my very own father. He even called me son. 'I'm not inclined to take your lunch, son, but all this hungry crowd — what are we to do about feeding them, you and I? There's water for them to drink in the stream, but nothing to eat. They *would* follow Me here, and now unless you come to the rescue and trust Me with your lunch to divide up among them . . . will you, Mesech? I promise there will be plenty for everybody — for you, too.' "

" 'I don't mind about me,' I answered, 'and of course I trust You, Master. Only please — can You stretch it so that there'll be enough for You, too?'

"He smiled again and said, 'Plenty for everybody.' Our secret talk together was over and the feast began and there *was* enough for thousands and thousands of people — and Mother, I'd die for Him any moment He wanted me to!"

The Feast with the Publicans

"ALL RIGHT, Andrew, that may have been the way it happened to you and Philip and John, but there I was still sitting at my place in the customs house, taking taxes and delighted to think I was getting richer and

3.

THE SAVIOUR — *El Greco*

richer every day, with no idea of what was going to happen to me. I'd heard them talking of Jesus, of course; Ezar was spreading it all over the city about His miracles and cures, casting out devils and putting them into a herd of swine which rushed down the cliff into the sea. I can tell you that some of the swineherds weren't too pleased about it, and they had quite a dispute about it at the market. One listens to gossip, you know, but it doesn't somehow touch on one's own life and doings. In fact, it comes under the heading of light entertainment.

"And then the other day, I looked up from counting my change because I was just going to haul a lad over the coals who had given me short money,

A typical street in older Nazareth

MATSON

Nazareth. In the background is the Hill of Precipitation, where the elders tried to hurl Jesus over a cliff.

Another view of Nazareth. Mount Thabor, scene of the Transfiguration, is in the background.

MATSON

Mary's Well at Nazareth

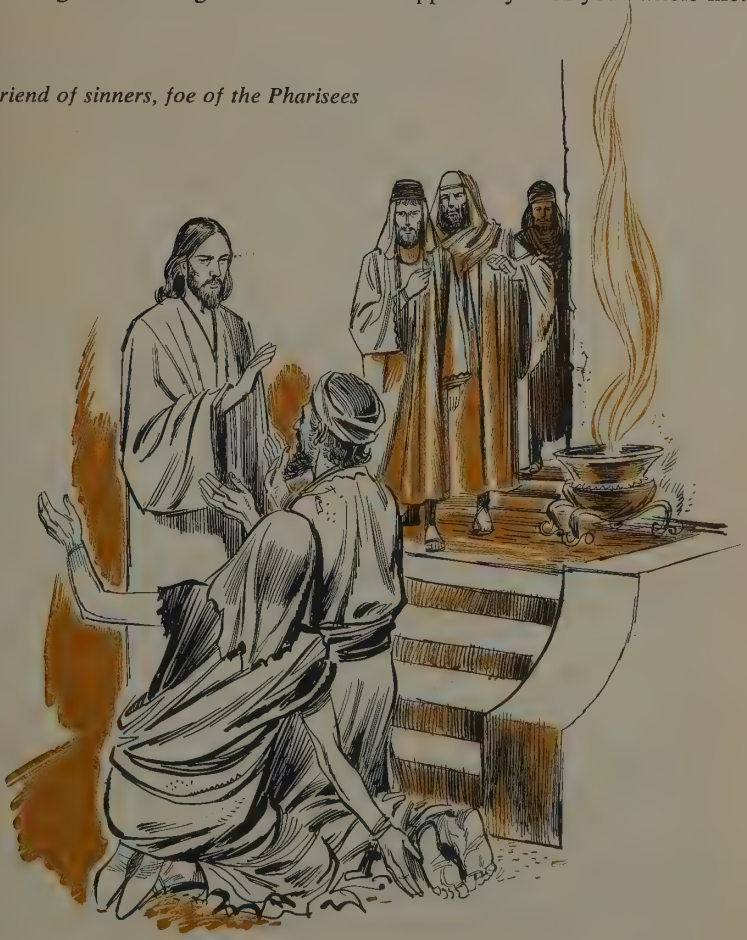
Nazareth, from the road leading eastward

MATSON

and I said to myself, 'Hello, that's the prophet. Couldn't mistake Him. Now I suppose He'll turn His head away and pass me by as though I were a bad smell. You can't expect a holy man not to feel like that about a dishonest tax collector.' And it's true, He didn't actually stop. But He didn't turn away His head either. He smiled at me like an old friend and said, 'Follow Me!'

" 'Follow Me' — as though He took for granted that you were the sort of man who, as soon as He called you, *must* recognize that this was far and away the grandest thing that would ever happen to you in your whole life.

Friend of sinners, foe of the Pharisees



10.

CHRIST AND THE REPENTANT WOMAN — *Rubens*

No, Nathaniel, I haven't forgotten, you've told me seven times already the story of how He saw you sitting under the fig tree before He could possibly have seen you or known you were there."

Matthew went on: "I never thought twice — just went ahead and invited Him to my lodgings. I didn't even think to warn Him humbly that He might not enjoy my pals' company as much as we would enjoy His, Him so glorious

and us such a mixed lot. I just felt that this called for a celebration. I had to let off steam or I'd have burst and gone flying into little pieces. The Master, He just laughed and agreed at once that a feast was the very thing. He was all for feasts and celebrations, especially this sort, informal and on the spur of the moment. And He was the life of the party, somehow even more when He listened to our stories and got the point right away — though He was a wonderful teller of tales Himself.

"He said once that He couldn't bear those important feasts 'where they only invite Me because they're curious to see what I'm like.' When one of us suggested that the Pharisees might do that very thing, He laughed again and said, 'Might? They will!'

"And believe me or not, they did! A bit later they got hold of me and asked, not very politely, 'How can this Master of yours possibly hobnob at table with riffraff like you and your friends?'

"Now this was an odd thing. I didn't notice that Jesus was standing beside me at that moment, nor had the Pharisees, and all His mood of laughing and enjoying Himself had gone. I would have been afraid, but those Pharisees don't know when to be afraid and when not. Anyway, He gave them a hard look and said, 'It is those who are sick who need a physician, not those who are well.' "

Nicodemus

"NOT WASHED His hands before the meal!" exclaimed Jared (JAY-red), a scribe, incredulous at what Simon the Pharisee was telling him. "You invited Him to your midday dinner, and He came in and sat down at your table. . . ."

Jared was shocked, yet greedy to hear more about this glutton and wine-bibber who apparently drank in a free and easy fashion when in the home of a common tax-gatherer yet seemed not to appreciate the privilege of being asked to the home of an elder of the Temple. "I wonder why He bothered to come at all."

But Simon the Pharisee shook his head. "This chance of denouncing us was what He wanted, and He seized on it. Naturally none of us minds what an insolent madman chooses to call us — we who have always paid such scrupulous attention to the ritual washing, and thoroughly clean every inch

of the cups and dishes we use; we who always award to God the tenth part of all we possess. And as for thundering blame upon us for taking the first seats in the synagogue, where else should we sit? They're ours by right. Should *we* sit at the back with the publicans? And when poor fellows run

4.

HEAD OF CHRIST — *Van Dyck*

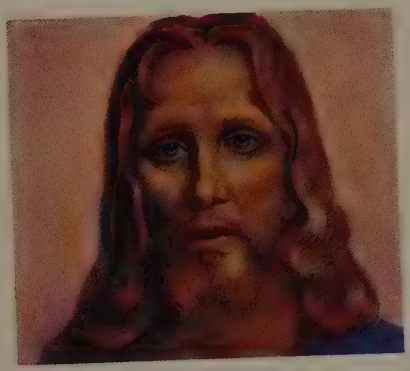
forward to kiss our hands in the marketplace, it isn't as if we *wanted* them kissed, but it gives the poor fellows pleasure, so we don't draw away.

"But He actually denounced us for these tributes to our righteousness: 'Woe upon you, you Pharisees, you are like whitened tombs — fine to look at but full of dead man's bones.'

"Peresh (PEA-resh), the lawyer, answered Him straight out. 'Master,' he reminded Him, 'that piece of contempt includes us too!'

"At this, Jesus turned upon him as well. 'You lawyers, loading men with packs too heavy to be borne, packs that you yourselves won't touch with one finger!' Upon my word, I'm not sure He didn't use the words 'brood of

vipers, hypocrites, murderers,' which perhaps the lawyers may be, but *us*? 'You Pharisees who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel' — that sort of rant is bound to spread among ignorant people. It's our duty, therefore, to keep watch on His activities, to lie in wait and hunt Him down. A man so



7.

HEAD OF CHRIST — *James Hope*

outspoken — eloquent, His vulgar followers would call it — is a danger to Israel.

"Naturally, He need not expect ever to be asked again to any of our feasts. Bad enough that He should have dared to flog the traders for selling their wares in the court of the Temple, considering they had our permission. But this defiance and disrespect — Nicodemus (NICK-o-DEE-mus) agrees with me," he added, interpreting, as he thought, the silent Pharisee who had joined them a few moments before and stood listening to Simon's description of a feast at which he himself had not been present.

"Yet one can't help honoring such courage," remarked Nicodemus slowly.

Wherever Jesus went, crowds followed Him happily.

The paralyzed man, now cured, kneels before Jesus in adoration and thanks.

FROM THE BBC TELEVISION SERIES, *"Jesus of Nazareth"*

The other two elders were surprised. Nicodemus had always been so timid, had so rarely raised his voice against the majority, that they had wholly taken for granted his support. As they separated, they glanced at him perhaps a little less contemptuously than usual, although annoyed that he should ally himself for even a moment with this firebrand from Nazareth. Still, what could it matter what Nicodemus thought or said?

They would have been astonished had they known that Nicodemus was hardly thinking of them at all, but only of how worried he was now for having gone to see Jesus secretly at night. He had been afraid that the other Jewish rulers might hear of it, yet how desperately he had wanted to know whether this prophet who could work miracles was really sent from God to teach them.

To Nicodemus' question, Jesus had answered, "Believe Me, a man cannot see the kingdom of God unless he is born anew."

"But," Nicodemus had protested, "how is it possible for a man to be born when he is already old?"

"Believe Me again, Nicodemus, no man can enter the Kingdom of God unless birth comes to him from water and from the Holy Spirit. The wind blows where it will and we who hear its sound know nothing of the way it came nor where it goes."

Later, sitting in his garden in the shade of an olive tree and glad to be alone, Nicodemus reflected how Jesus had not once reproached him for his cowardice in visiting Him stealthily and under cover of darkness. Though completely without fear Himself, Jesus had marvelously understood. Perhaps one day — it might not be for a long time — yet one day he himself might catch this quality of valor, and redeem his former faintheartedness by doing a service for the Master, in sight of all the world.

Mary and the Lost Silver Piece

IT HAD BEEN a very hot day. When Ezar came along and found Mary resting outside her house in the cool of evening, he gave a sigh of relief at being able to sit down beside her and accept her offer of a drink of cold water, a dish of figs, and some barley cakes.

Mary knew that Ezar went pattering along wherever he heard Jesus might be working miracles, so it was in the hope that he might be able to give her

some news that she asked a little wistfully, "Have you seen my Son lately?"

Ezar nodded, his mouth full, and a moment later poured out the thrilling incident of a ruler of the synagogue named Jairus (JAY-ih-rus). He had implored Jesus to come to his house, for he had faith that the Master could cure his only daughter, twelve years old, who was dying.

"So He went along, and the crowd swept on with Him, but on our way a messenger came to Jairus to say sadly: 'No need to trouble the Master.

Joseph taught young Jesus the carpenter's trade.

Your daughter is dead.' Your Son, however, reassured him and told him not to be afraid: he had only to believe and the little girl would recover.

"When we reached Jairus' house, He wouldn't let anyone go in with Him except Peter and James and John and the child's father and mother. But I crept in after them. They were all weeping and lamenting, and the mourners were playing the flute; but Jesus said quietly, 'The maiden is not dead, she is asleep.'

" 'But she *is* dead, she *is* dead,' they all persisted. 'Do You think we can't tell that?'

"He paid no attention, but took the girl's hand and said 'Rise up!' And she sat up then and there, full of life, and began to talk.

"The people simply couldn't believe it. Her parents were beside themselves with joy. In all the hullabaloo that followed, Jesus was the only one who remained perfectly calm and practical. He said, 'Give her something to eat; she'll need it.' "

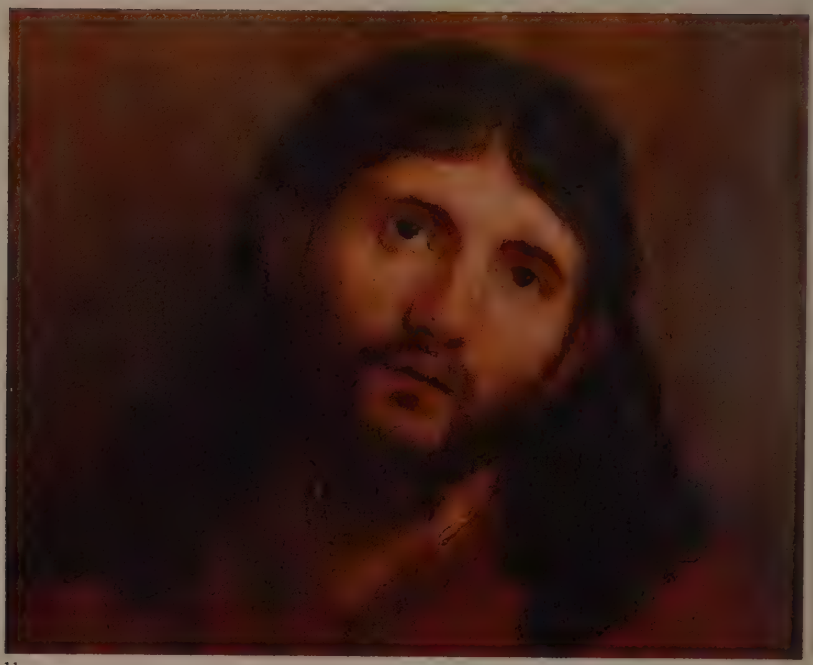
Ezar broke off and accepted another luscious fig. "Thank you, thank you, ma'am. You're always very thoughtful."

Mary smiled. "You sound more astonished that Jesus reminded them to give the child something to eat than that He woke her from death."

Ezar pondered her remark for a moment, then spoke thoughtfully. "Do you know, I believe you're right. At first, when I was so excited about these miracles He performed, casting out devils and healing lepers and giving back sight to the blind, I simply couldn't believe it was true. I *had* to see it with my own eyes, and once or twice when I arrived too late, I nearly cried with disappointment. But now — now it seems more and more that I know beforehand He will be able to do whatever He says, and it's just the small human things like telling them to give the child something to eat that still amaze me, not the miracle itself. In this case, perhaps He was remembering His own home here with you and the times He might have remembered you saying, 'Stop making a fuss and give her something to eat.' "

Now they were joined in the doorway by Caleb (KAY-lub) and Lydia, a neighboring shepherd and his wife who often dropped in uninvited, thinking Mary might be feeling lonely nowadays when she so seldom saw her beloved only Son.

"It's true," Caleb remarked, "He does always know His facts from start to finish. For instance, your husband Joseph taught Him to be a carpenter,



11.

HEAD OF CHRIST — *Rembrandt*

and there's no better carpenter for miles around. But being a shepherd is my job, not His. Yet once He and I were discussing the difference between a good shepherd and a hired shepherd who cares nothing for the sheep because they are not his own. The sheep recognize my voice. I walk in front of them and they naturally follow me, but they would never trust these hirelings who the moment they see a wolf run for their lives. Anyway, Jesus knew as much about all this as I do."

Ezar nodded. "You can always tell when a man comes from the right sort of home. Those parables of the Master aren't all heavy with grandeur and loaded with gold embroidery. He's practical and down to earth." Suddenly

Jesus raises the daughter of Jairus from the dead.

"What shall I do to gain eternal life?" asks the rich young man.

FROM THE BBC TELEVISION SERIES, *"Jesus of Nazareth"*

CAMERA CLIX

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT — *Carl Bloch*

FREDERIKSBORG CASTLE, DENMARK

2.

"Ecce Homo" — *Murillo*

VATICAN

recalling another parable, he leaned forward and touched Mary's arm.

"Tell me, ma'am, have you by any chance ever lost a silver piece?"

"How could you possibly have known, Ezar? It was years ago. I had ten and I did lose one of them, so I lit the lamp and swept the house and searched everywhere until I found it. And then — you remember, don't you, Lydia? — I called you in and all our other neighbors and we had quite a celebration, I was so delighted to have found that one missing silver piece. I had been so afraid that it was gone forever."

"But you would still have had the other nine."

Mary shook her head vigorously. "It didn't matter. I cared about finding

the one that was lost." Yes, she mused, and Jesus would have been here at the time, for it was long before the wedding at Cana, when He began going around preaching all over the countryside. "But Ezar, how did you know about it?"

"The Master used the story in one of the parables He tells the multitude, and I guessed that He must surely have seen it happen in His own home because the tale sounded so true to life. His voice softened as He told it, just as though the Mother whom He loved so warmly and tenderly were actually standing there by His side."

The Rich Young Man

THE RICH YOUNG MAN sat sorrowful and alone in a room of his splendid house. He wished and wished that he could have done as the Master had suggested. Before he had turned away, though the struggle was still going on within him, he was aware in a strange way that the battle had already been lost. Just at that moment he heard Jesus remark sadly to His disciples that it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

"Have I made a ghastly mistake?" the young man kept asking himself. "No, He was asking far, far too much. It isn't as though I had sinned in the past. Then He might have wanted me to do something as drastic as selling all I have and giving it to the poor, as a sort of penance. But He said Himself, when I asked Him what I had to do to achieve eternal life, that I should keep the Ten Commandments. 'Master,' I replied, 'I have kept these ever since I grew up.' Oh, if only I had gone away quickly, before He had time to tell me about selling all my possessions, I would now be sitting here perfectly content. As it is, I won't be able to sleep quietly tonight or tomorrow night or for weeks and weeks — if ever. . . .

"It's all very well for those fishermen friends of His. What did they have to give up compared with me? Even the holy rabbi Himself was only a carpenter, so He doesn't realize that riches mean responsibilities. You can't blame Him for not being able to take in what it involves, to give up houses and land and servants. Still, He had no right to ask it of me.

"Treasure is Heaven? Yes, but Heaven is such a long way off. And I'm young. He ought to know that I want to keep my riches for the sake of the

CAMERA CLIX

AUGUST JERNDORFF

Jesus and the Little Children

CAMERA CLIX

F. C. Lund

CAMERA CLIX

A. Wilhelm Steinhausen

CAMERA CLIX

H. CLEMENTZ

good I can do with them, not to be powerful and important. And following Him might be like following an unreal dream, and by the time He discovered I was of no use, I couldn't have come home and taken up my former life because my house and servants would have gone — beyond recall.

5.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED — *Giovanni Bellini*
ITALIAN SCHOOL, 1427-1515

"But Lord, the way He looked at me — as though He loved me. . . . I'll be haunted by His eyes all my life. They were so deep and disappointed after I shook my head! That was why I lingered a while, hoping against hope that if He loved me, He would yield a little, only a little, and not insist that I must sell *all* that belongs to me. If He loved me, what was to prevent Him from giving in a little?"

The young man paused a moment, then burst out bitterly, "He's a fanatic! I hate Him!"

But that was not the end of the young man's musing. He went on. "Or if He had only commanded me, instead of leaving me to make up my own

mind! Naturally I would have obeyed. But He didn't even try and persuade me — He left me *free!*

"Yet how could I in one flash change my whole way of living? I'm not a sinner. I've kept the Commandments and go on keeping them. There's no harm in riches if one isn't selfish and bad. 'Follow Me!' He said. He hoped I was a hero, but I'm not. I despise myself. . . ."

There he sat, the rich young man, surrounded by the possessions he had chosen to keep. But never again would they seem anything but hollow to him.

Malchus

THE HIGH PRIEST of the Temple came to console Malchus (MAL-kus), his servant. "A most unfortunate incident, my poor fellow. I was truly grieved when I heard of it. Yet you must at least feel satisfied now that that criminal has got His deserts. If ever a man merited to be crucified like a common thief . . ."

Malchus made no reply and his master went on. "I gather, however, that it was not actually this Jesus Himself, but one of His rash followers, who sliced off your ear when you tried to arrest Him? Though no doubt he was incited to it."

"No!" burst out Malchus suddenly. Not used to contradiction, Caiphas (KAY-ih-fus) stopped short in his smooth flow of sympathy. After a long pause, Malchus continued, "Would you like to see the torn and bleeding place where my ear got cut off?"

The high priest was somewhat disconcerted, having no desire to see an unpleasant wound. But naturally he could not be seen flinching from the spectacle. So his servant's right ear was displayed to him . . . whole and sound on his head.

Malchus watched his face and smiled ironically at his utter bewilderment. "Sir, you're looking at a miracle. This Jesus, whom we were sent to arrest with lanterns and torches and weapons, touched my ear after one of His hot-tempered disciples nearly cut it off while slashing about with a sword. He touched the place and at once it was healed."

"I refuse to believe it happened that way. You have been bribed to make up the story."

"Bribed? With thirty pieces of silver perhaps, like His betrayer Judas

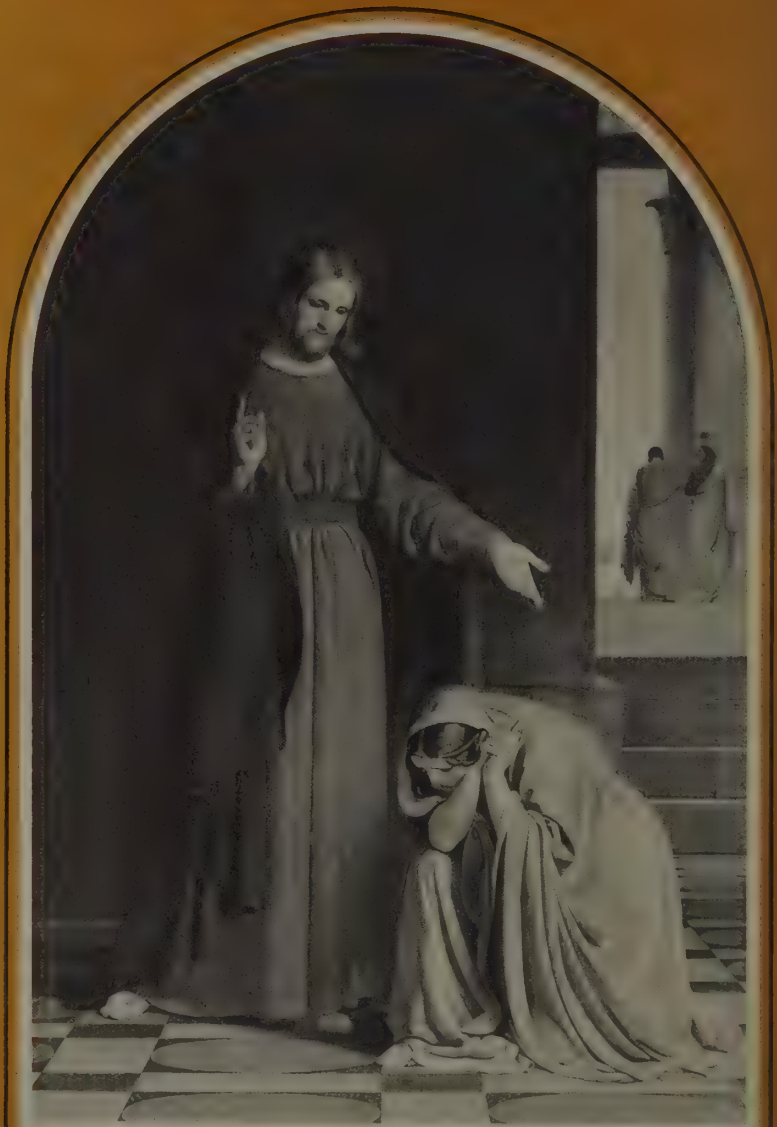
who led us to the Garden of Gethsemani (geth-SEM-uh-nee)?" Malchus now spoke out with passion. "It's time you stopped twisting the truth! I'm your servant no longer, my lord Caiphas. I tell you, I went out with the others to arrest Him, one of His enemies, expecting a fight. He told His

8.

CHRIST — *Titian*

friends to sheathe their swords, but a little too late.

"When I close my eyes, I can still see the olive trees dark in the garden until our torchlight flared on them. I can still hear the clash of arms, and I remember that searing pain at the side of my head. Oh, my comrades will tell you how I yelled and writhed and cursed. Yet He, in His worst hour, thought only about what He could do for me."



CAMERA CLIX

JESUS FORGIVES THE SINFUL WOMAN — *Wegener*

"You let yourself be too easily impressed," sneered Caiphas. "What does all this prove? It was merely a trick, some cheap satanic magic. You're not a very clever fellow, Malchus."

"Clever? Your scribes are clever. I'm not and never was. But now when my wife whispers into my right ear, I needn't growl, 'I can't hear a single word you say, I've no ear to hear you with!' Anyway, it isn't so much His power to work miracles, but the fact that He cared about healing *my* pain, even though He saw all the pain ahead of Him. I might have enrolled as His follower, but you didn't give me very long, did you, my lord Caiphas? Not long between then and the scourging and the crown of thorns pressed down on His head and the nails hammered into His flesh! Only then did I know..."

"What did you know, you insolent fool?"

"That He who cured me without thinking of Himself must be . . . the Son of God."

The Disciple of the Beloved Disciple

JOHN, the beloved disciple, now grown old, was sometimes overcome by a desperate loneliness when he was exiled on the Greek island of Patmos (PAT-mus) — lonely even with the four scribes who had insisted on accompanying him and writing down his Gospel as he dictated it. They wrote with a stylus on parchment against a sloping rock in his cave, so that the world might read it hereafter. Yet John was happiest when simply talking to his heart's content to the youngest of the four, Prochorus (PROCK-o-rus), who seemingly never tired of hearing every detail of every incident in the life of Jesus. Eagerly the young man would ask question after question. . . .

"Do you suppose, Master, that He knew you would be the last to be left alive of His disciples?"

"He knew from all eternity," said John firmly. "He had been prophesying Peter's death by martyrdom. 'Feed My lambs,' He said to him, and 'Feed My sheep.'

"Then Peter turned and saw me following, and asked what was to happen to me. Would I too be martyred?

"Jesus didn't reply directly, but merely said, 'What is that to you?' He always told us only as much as we were then ready to hear. We understood so little — it seems strange to me now, looking back, how little.

"I tell you, Prochorus, my mother once went to Him and fell on her knees to make a very special request on my behalf and my brother's — you know how mothers do! 'Here are my two sons,' she said, indicating James and myself. 'Grant that in Your kingdom one of them will sit on Your right and the other on Your left.' And neither James nor I minded her asking such a foolish question. In fact, I'm ashamed to say that we felt very much the same about it ourselves, and were puzzled when He replied so gravely that neither on His right hand nor on His left were the places His to give. They were for those for whom His Father had destined them."

"And were you disappointed?"

But John's thoughts were far away, and Prochorus, remorseful in case he was intruding on his master's reverie, regretted his question. They had been working very hard all that day, he and Thara (THAY-ruh) and Abiel (AY-be-el) and Demetrius (duh-ME-tree-us), so it was good, now that evening was here, to relax and listen.

Presently John spoke again. "Strange . . . remembering every word He said, the tone in which He had said it, the look in His eyes — still I failed to recognize Him when He appeared to us on the evening of the day after the Sabbath, the day we had found His tomb empty. The door was locked because we were afraid the rulers of the Temple would discover us. And suddenly He stood in our midst and said, 'Peace be to you!' and then, 'Don't be afraid,' for we were cowering full of terror as though He were some evil apparition. Imagine us being afraid of Him, and not at once leaping to our feet, wild with joy!"

Prochorus tried gently to excuse their terror. "You had seen Him crucified and taken down from the Cross, dead."

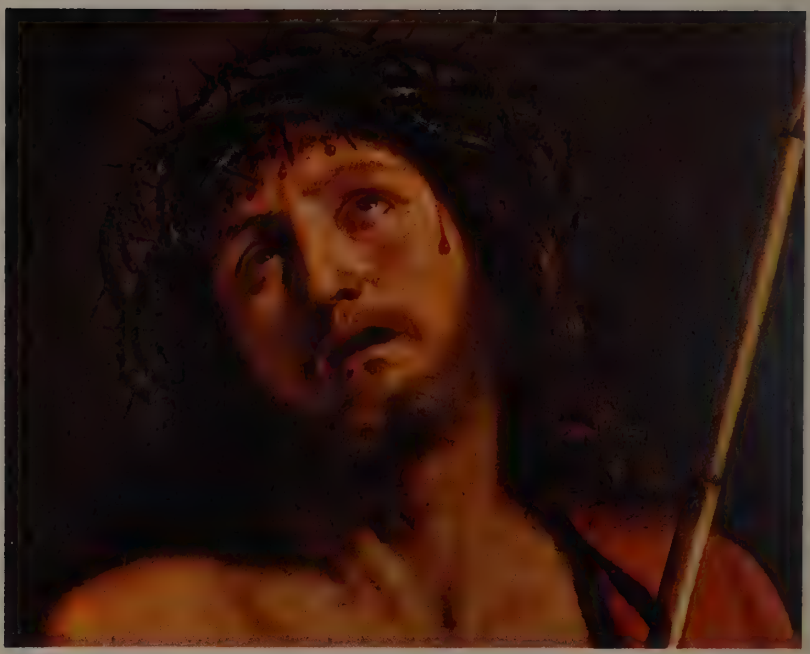
John shuddered. "Yes, but even so. . . . Yet He knew well how to reassure us. No long discourses, not a word of reproach, simply, 'Have you anything here to eat?' We had a piece of roast fish and a honeycomb, and He sat down with us and shared the meal."

"It must have seemed too good to be true," whispered Prochorus, breathless at the scene thus vividly conjured up.

"It *was* true, Prochorus, and too good to be true — both at the same time. That very afternoon Cleophas (KLEE-o-fus) and another disciple were walking to a village called Emmaus (eh-MAY-us). Jesus drew near and began to walk beside them and make the Scriptures plain, yet they also failed

FROM THE BBC TELEVISION SERIES, *"Jesus of Nazareth"*

Parents always brought their children to Jesus.



12.

"Ecce Homo" — *Giovanni Francesco Barbieri ("Il Guercino")*

ROME

to recognize Him. They even asked, 'Are You the only pilgrim to Jerusalem who hasn't heard of what happened in the last few days to the prophet, Jesus of Nazareth?'

"When they got near the village, they pressed their unknown companion to stay with them. When they sat down to dinner, He took bread, blessed and broke it, and offered it to them — and vanished. Only then did they realize who He was. Breaking bread and giving it to us to eat contained a mysterious potency. Remember, when by a touch He raised Jairus' daughter from the dead, He ordered them to give her something to eat."

CAMERA CLIX

CHRIST AMONG THE DOCTORS — *Gentileschi*

NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

"Master, you haven't told me the story of Jairus' daughter."

"Yes, yes, I must have. You've forgotten."

So Prochorus let it go without further protest; perhaps he would hear more when he managed not to interrupt the old man's memories.

"Have you ever noticed, boy, how a thing which has happened before goes on happening over and over again when you fail to understand at first? It's as though God Himself were doing His best to impress it upon us and forgiving us for being such slow-witted fools."

"Yes, I've noticed that. Did this special thing which you say happened before also have to do with eating?"

"Eating together with Him. We had been fishing from Peter's boat on the Sea of Galilee. We caught nothing all that night. When morning came, a man standing on the shore called out, 'Have you caught anything, friends?'

"We said no, so the man told us to cast the net to the right of the boat. We obeyed, and in a few moments we had such a shoal of fish that we hadn't enough strength to haul them in.

"Again I hadn't recognized Him at once, but in a flash it struck me who it was and I exclaimed to Peter, 'It's the Lord!' At least I had been the first to recognize Him," John added with a touch of pride.

"We went ashore and found a charcoal fire with fish and bread cooking on it. Jesus said, 'Bring some of the fish you have just caught and have some breakfast with Me.' "

Suddenly Prochorus burst out, "But always wanting to break bread — it links up with the story you told me yesterday about Jesus healing a man born blind — not just by touch or from a distance, as with the centurion's servant, but using clay and spittle to spread on his eyes — always using earthly things while He was on earth, to show us how to go on using them after He was gone."

Prochorus broke off, abashed at his own daring. "Forgive me, Master, but since we came here I feel as though, through you, I were meeting Jesus Himself, hearing day after day what you remember and knowing that there is more and more to come, like water from a never-ending well. You won't ever be finished, will you?"

"Have no fear, my lad." John smiled and laid an affectionate hand on the young man's arm. "There remains so much else which Jesus did that if all of it were put in writing, I don't think the world itself could contain the books which would have to be written."

The events related in this album appear in the Holy Bible as follows: The Boy and the Doctors in the Temple: Luke 2 • The Calling of Nathaniel: John 1 • The Wedding Feast at Cana, and The Scourging of the Traders and Money-Changers: John 2 • The Woman at Jacob's Well: John 4 • The Curing of the Paralyzed Man: Matthew 9, Mark 2, Luke 5 • The Man Possessed by an Unclean Spirit: Mark 1, Luke 4 • The Man with a Withered Hand: Matthew

12, Mark 3, Luke 6 • The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes: Matthew 14, Mark 6, Luke 9, John 6 • The Feast with the Publicans: Matthew 9, Mark 2, Luke 5 • Nicodemus: John 3 • The Lost Silver Piece: Luke 15 • Jairus' Daughter: Matthew 9, Mark 5, Luke 8 • The Good Shepherd: John 10 • The Rich Young Man: Matthew 19, Mark 10, Luke 18 • Malchus: Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, John 18 • The Disciple of the Beloved Disciple — "Feed My Lambs": John 21 • The Mother of James and John Makes a Special Request: Matthew 20 • "Peace Be to You" and Emmaus: Luke 24 • Fishing from Peter's Boat: John 21 • A Man Born Blind: Mark 8.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

G. B. STERN's eventful life includes a play written at the age of eight, a novel published when she was twenty, travels and education in Germany and Switzerland, two years of study at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, the destruction of her London home and 2,000-volume library in the wartime blitz, and contracts to write Hollywood scripts. Her literary output ranges from short stories, free-lance journalism and film scripts through informal reminiscences and fable-satires to biography, novels and plays. For over thirty years she has averaged more than a book a year; her better known titles include *Robert Louis Stevenson, For All We Know, And Did He Stop and Speak to You* and *Unless I Marry*. Miss Stern became a Catholic in 1947; *All in Good Time* is the story of her conversion. She divides her time between London and her English country home.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

PEN-AND-INK SKETCHES for this album are the work of Creig Flessel, prominent book and magazine illustrator whose watercolors can frequently be seen at New York exhibitions. His hobbies are boating and clamming — two activities he can enjoy with his charming wife and two children. He and Mrs. Flessel are also active in their church's youth program.

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